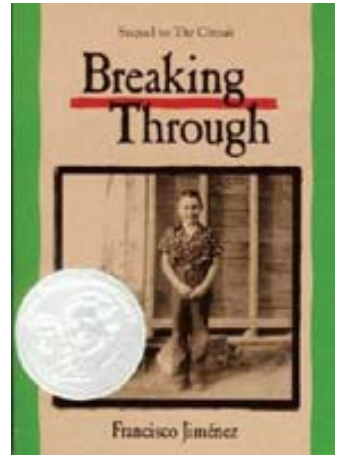


“There is at bottom only one problem in the world...
How does one break through? How
does one get into the open?
How does one burst the cocoon and become a
butterfly?”

Thomas Mann, *Dr. Faustus*

Breaking Through
Francisco Jiménez
Houghton Mifflin Company 2001



Winner of the 2001 Américas Award (<http://claspprograms.org/americasaward>)

Grade Levels

9-12

Curriculum Areas

Language Arts • Social Studies • American History

National Language Arts Standards NL-ENG.K-12.8 DEVELOPING RESEARCH SKILLS

Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, film) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

United States History Standard 31 Understands economic, social, and cultural developments in the contemporary United States.

Civics Standard 25

Understands issues regarding personal, political, and economic rights.

Objectives

- To provide a range of culturally diverse literature meeting students' needs to understand themselves and to understand worldviews among other cultures.
- To explore issues surrounding the use of itinerant child labor on farms around the nation.
- Identify the associations that the words **Farm**, **Immigrant** and **Migrant Worker** have for them.
- To provide meaningful, authentic opportunities to read vocabulary in a variety of contexts; language in a cultural context.

Overview

A welcomed sequel to his award-winning novel *The Circuit* (1997), the autobiographical journey of the son in a family of migrant farmworkers continues. Readers come to learn that Panchito, deported to Mexico when it seemed that his hardworking family was finally on the roads to some financial solvency, makes it back to the U.S. with his documentation in order. In the convincing voice of a young adolescent, we hear the details of his life in California in the early sixties. Not only in the fields but also

throughout his high school experiences, we see Panchito straddle two worlds. He continues to be the hardworking, dutiful son in an economically struggling immigrant family and also dedicates himself to his role as a conscientious and respected student at Santa Clara High School. The tenacity and resourcefulness of this young man are simply yet powerfully revealed in the ordinary yet extraordinary events he recounts. The values Jiménez brings to the table, just as unobtrusively as migrant farm workers provide produce for consumption, offer stunning nourishment for young adolescent readers of this newest segment of his life story.

Activities

See: *Breaking Through Study Guide* <https://www.scu.edu/fjimenez/study-guides/>

Internet Websites

Américas Story - César Chávez

http://www.americaslibrary.gov/aa/chavez/aa_chavez_peace_1.html

Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs

<http://www.afop.org>

Breaking Through Study Guide

<https://www.scu.edu/fjimenez/study-guides/>

The Child Labor Coalition

<http://www.natlconsumersleague.org/clc.htm>

The New Americans - Mexican Story

http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/newamericans/mexican_intro.html

Tolerance.org, Southern Poverty Law Center

http://www.tolerance.org/news/article_tol.jsp?id=1024

The United States Department of Labor

<http://www.dol.gov/>

Work Forced: Exploring Issues Facing Young Farm Workers-The New York Times Learning Network

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20000807monday.html>